



Wellbeing Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 28 July 2020, 4 p.m.
Meeting to be held remotely (via Teams Channel)

Agenda

Committee members:

Dr Andy Rice (Chair)
Jo de Bono
Caroline Stewart
Celia Burns (Secretary)

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020 for publication on the Committee website.

3. Situation Update

4. Update on Action Items

i) Virtual Tea/Coffee Breaks

At the last meeting, the Committee had agreed to continue with the Zoom meetings. To review.

ii) Wellbeing Clinic/Virtual 'Corridor'

The Committee had agreed to continue offering and advertising the slots even though there had been no uptake so far. JD had agreed to ask the Head of Department if the slots could be included in the announcements for the Wednesday meetings.

iii) Counsellor initiative

JD was to report on the list of wellbeing contacts in the West Cambridge departments and their amenability to having a meeting to discuss primarily the shared counsellor initiative but also for anything else that might come up.

iv) Central HR's Review of the Staff Review and Development (SRD) Process

Quo Pham, HR Manager, had agreed to share the feedback from central HR's recent SRD review with the Committee if it was available for sharing.

- v) *SRD processes for academic-related staff and professional services*
Following the Committee's recommendation for the SRD processes for academic-related staff and professional services to be reviewed and re-implemented, Quo Pham had agreed to address this issue with central HR and come back to the Committee with further information in September 2020.
- vi) *Continuation of Wednesday meetings*
Committee members had noted that it would be good if the Wednesday meetings could continue over the summer break, chaired by a DHD when necessary. CS was going to bring this up at a HoD team meeting.
- vii) *Avoidance of formal meetings over various periods during the summer*
Committee members had highlighted the Vice-Chancellor's encouragement to Departments and Institutions to adopt a policy of avoiding formal meetings over various periods, and CS had agreed to bring this up at a HoD team meeting, suggesting that we follow the policy of avoiding formal meetings on Mondays and Fridays and designate a week in August where there would be no formal meetings.

5. Graduate Student Forum (GSF) Wellbeing Report

To receive: minutes of the GSF meeting, which took place on 19 May 2020 and focused mainly on student wellbeing, and a wellbeing report produced for the Wellbeing Committee (both papers attached).

6. Research Staff Forum (RSF) Wellbeing Report

Nothing to report. The next meeting will take place in Michaelmas term.

7. Student Wellbeing Internal Audit—Executive Summary

To discuss once circumstances are more normal.

8. Discussion Items

i) Counsellor for the West Cambridge site

To discuss

9. Next Discussion Item(s)

To decide on the item(s) for discussion at the next meeting.

10. Any Other Business

11. Date of Next Meeting



Wellbeing Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 23 June 2020, 3 p.m.
Meeting held remotely (via Teams Channel)

Minutes

Present:

Dr Andy Rice (Chair)
Celia Burns (Secretary)
Jo de Bono
Caroline Stewart

Quo Pham, HR Manager, joined the meeting for item 8(i), 'Staff Review and Development,' which was discussed at the beginning of the meeting. Mr Pham accepted the Chair's invitation to stay for the rest of the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence
None.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2020 were approved for publication on the Committee website, subject to small amendments to item 9iii.

3. Situation Update

Committee members each gave an update on how they were doing in relation to the coronavirus situation.

4. Update on Action Items

i) Staff Review and Development (SRD) Process

Quo Pham, HR Manager, was invited to this meeting for a discussion about the SDR process (see item 8(i)).

ii) Wellbeing Advisory Lunch

JD has uploaded the presentation from the lunch to the Wellbeing Committee Teams channel.

iii) ICE Wellbeing at Work course

JD will try to do this course the next time it is offered.

- iv) *Research Staff Forum (RSF)—departmental announcements on wellbeing*
CB has asked the Chair of the RSF to make any departmental announcements about wellbeing at each RSF meeting (as is already the case in the Graduate Student Forum).
- v) *Virtual Tea/Coffee Breaks*
CS reported that when she had joined a virtual break last week, there were only a few staff members participating. Committee members agreed to continue with the Zoom meetings so that the opportunity is there for more staff members should they want to participate in the future. It was acknowledged that people were probably meeting separately within their own teams/groups.
- vi) *Wellbeing Clinic/Virtual ‘Corridor’*
Committee members agreed to continue offering and advertising the slots even though there had been no uptake so far. It was suggested that advertisements could be added to other announcements (for example, notifications for the Wednesday meetings). JD agreed to mention this to the Head of Department.

Action: JD

Committee members noted that it would be good if the Wednesday meetings could continue over the summer break, chaired by a DHD when necessary. This would provide continuity, and meetings would be particularly useful since there will be business to discuss over the summer (e.g., lecture recording, and other issues related to the current situation).

Committee members also highlighted the Vice-Chancellor’s encouragement to Departments and Institutions to adopt a policy of avoiding formal meetings, as much as is possible or practical, on Mondays and Fridays. The Vice-Chancellor had also encouraged colleagues to, over the month of August, proceed with formal meetings only when they are of an urgent or emergency nature. CS agreed to bring these issues to a HoD team meeting, to suggest we follow the policy of avoiding formal meetings on Mondays and Fridays and to designate a week in August where there would be no formal meetings.

Action: CS

- vii) *Counsellor initiative*
JD was to report on the list of wellbeing contacts in the West Cambridge departments and their amenability to having a meeting to discuss primarily the shared counsellor initiative but also for anything else that might come up.

This item will be addressed at the next meeting.

5. Graduate Student Forum (GSF) Wellbeing Report

There was nothing to report.

6. Research Staff Forum (RSF) Wellbeing Report

The Committee received a minute from the RSF meeting held on 22 May 2020.

7. Student Wellbeing Internal Audit—Executive Summary

Committee members agreed to discuss the Executive Summary at a subsequent meeting.

8. Discussion Items

i) Staff Review and Development (SRD)

Quo Pham, HR Manager, joined the meeting to discuss this item. He noted that central HR had recently carried out an SRD review across all staff types. The review had received a lot of feedback, with most people finding the SRD process to be helpful. Mr Pham agreed to share the feedback with the Committee if it was available for sharing.

Action: Quo Pham

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of the review processes, noting that, whereas the department has review processes for academics and post-docs, the processes for academic-related staff and research staff had lapsed due to the lack of staff resources. The Committee noted that, given current circumstances and remote working, as well as the differences in levels of supervision of these staff, these reviews could be a lot more important now.

The Committee also noted the importance of regular reviews, as well as training for both reviewers and reviewees. The benefit of joining up consecutive reviews was also noted (for example, referencing the paperwork from the previous review, and having a follow-up of the paperwork three or four months after the review meeting). In addition, the Committee noted the workload aspect of the review processes and was mindful that the processes should not create a burden for reviewers.

The Committee agreed to recommend that the SRD processes for academic-related staff and professional services staff be reviewed and re-implemented. Mr Pham was supportive of this and agreed to address the issue with central HR and come back to the Committee with further information in three months' time.

Action: Quo Pham

ii) Counsellor for the West Cambridge site

This item will be addressed at the next meeting.

9. Next Discussion Item(s)

This item will be addressed at the next meeting.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee agreed to hold the next meeting via Teams from 3-4 p.m. on Tuesday, 28 July 2020.



A meeting of the Graduate Students' Forum was held on Tuesday 19 May 2020 at 10:00 via Google Meet.

Members

- EK Researcher Development Coordinator
- LMG Graduate Education Manager
- MG RSP Organiser
- AI PLS group
- AS AI group
- HX NLIP group
- MM Computer Architecture group
- JP Digital Technology group
- NC Rainbow group
- IS Security group
- AF Systems group
- SI MPhil in ACS representative
- LQ Women@CL representative

1. Apologies for absence

EK, HX, JP, IS, AF

2. Approval of the minutes

-

3. Matters arising from the last meeting

At this meeting, we have decided to mainly focus on the wellbeing of our students, support they receive from their supervisors and the challenges of online undergraduate supervisions. Matters arising from the last meeting have been postponed until we are back at the lab given most of them are not relevant at this time.

4. Reports from group representatives

a. MM (Comp Architecture Group)

- i. Remote access seems to be working fine for students.
- ii. Regular group and scrum meetings – those who attend are fine, not sure about those who don't.

b. NC (Rainbow group)

- i. Received no response to his message to students about wellbeing – assuming everyone is ok.
- ii. Seminars are still going ahead.
- iii. Supervisions are to resume soon.
- iv. Suggests putting together an easily accessible single page with all wellbeing resources at the department and the uni. Students who'd need help could refer to this leaflet and find out quickly whom to contact. Additionally, we could list department wellbeing experts/contacts. NC will email Lise an example from his college next week.

Action: NC

c. LQ (Women@CL & Systems group)

- i. Everyone seems to be ok, some students are more / less productive if compared to them being in the lab.
- ii. Missing small group chat (2-3 people) – Women@CL trying to organize.
- iii. No technical issues reported.
- iv. Everyone seems to be in good health, trying to do some form of exercise in order to maintain their physical and mental health.



v. Issue with E-books – some are only available on lab machines

Action: LQ

d. AS (AI)

- i. pl219 has upgraded the group's Slack account to premium.
- ii. There are internal review meetings (on Google Meet and follow-up discussions on Slack) for reviewing each other's submissions before sending them to a conference.
- iii. Two students from the group are involved in Covid-related projects.

e. AI (PLS)

- i. PLS group is working well – has organized a WhatsApp group for all research students. Nk480 has a Slack channel for everyone he collaborates with. Regular group meetings.
- ii. Received no complaints from students.
- iii. Is pleased with university's Overleaf account
- iv. Would welcome recommendations for whiteboard alternatives to use for undergrad supervisions – MG distributed a list made up from suggestions on CL cooler chat, MM shared his tip:
<https://awwapp.com/>

Students wishing to join the CL cooler list, go to <https://lists.cam.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo/cl-cooler> - login with Raven and click subscribe.

f. SI (ACS)

- i. Accessibility of past MPhil projects
- ii. One-Minute Madness
- iii. Extension to a deadline for ACS project title changes - will be extended by a week to Friday 29 May at 16:00
- iv. Further extensions to ACS project submissions – up to 1 extra week through GEO.

g. HX (NLP)

- i. SSH problems when trying to connect to the department.
- ii. Many students mentioned that they found themselves less productive when working from home, which is quite stressful.
- iii. Department's VPN2 connection vs. the UIS VPN

5. Wellbeing

End of March/ beginning of April GEO organized a mini-survey on the current situation of our MPhil and research students. A 'Virtual open door' was introduced in mid May enabling students to 'drop-in' for an online chat. A report summarizing the points raised at this meeting, including suggestions for the department, will be sent to the CL Wellbeing Committee.

6. Matters for discussion

- i.
 - a) Online supervisions of undergraduate students:
 - b) Students in China cannot use Microsoft Teams (banned)
 - c) Undergrad students with mental issues must be referred to their DoS or College Tutor.
- ii. Supervisors – comments on the level of support from supervisors.
Everyone at the meeting was happy with the support from their supervisors.



7. Any other business

- i. Looking for a PhD rep for the Equality and diversity committee – AS has put herself forward.
- ii. Looking for a PhD rep for the Buildings and Environment committee – none of the GSF members are interested, therefore they will ask in their cohorts.

Action: Everyone

8. Date for next meeting

The next GSF meeting will be in Michaelmas. Confirm who stays on the Forum in 2020/2021.

Action: Everyone

UNAPPROVED

GSF report for the Wellbeing Committee, 19 May 2020

Based on a mini-survey conducted by MG at the beginning of April on the current situation of our research students at the time,* another similar survey conducted by JLR for the MPhil students, and also based on what was reported by the GSF members at our last GSF meeting on 19 May 2020, the majority of our students (both PhD and ACS) are doing well, are able to log in using VPN and are in regular contact with their group and supervisor. From those students who stayed in Cambridge, some reported being frustrated by the lack of social interactions. From those who went home, their main worry is not being as efficient at home as they would have been at the lab, and in some cases very bad Internet connection. Both groups have mentioned not having the same facilities as in the lab is slowing them down and some find it challenging to maintain good work-life balance. Apart from a few, they all talked highly of the level of support and understanding they have received from their supervisors. It was also good to see that regular group meetings were still going ahead and various other communications channels had been set up (WhatsApp, Slack etc).

Starting from this week, the GEO has introduced a virtual 'Open door', meaning each member of the office has put aside an hour each day when they are available to talk to students on Microsoft Teams. Students currently residing in considerably different time zones from the UK have been given the opportunity to arrange a time outside of these hours. So far this initiative has proven popular mainly with the PhD students.

What other things students have suggested that could be beneficial:

1. Having a 'wellbeing buddy'
2. Some are missing 'corridor-type chats' and would like to see more one-to-one or small group online chats
3. Having an easily accessible single page with all wellbeing resources at the department and the uni. Students who'd need help could refer to this leaflet and find out quickly whom to contact.
4. Organizing 'swap' meetings, for example for people close to submission of conference papers, in order to review each other's submission (AI group is already doing)

*Questions asked: Are you feeling well? Are you self-isolating / in quarantine? Do you have a suitable place to work? Do you have a reliable internet service? Do you have access to all resources you require? Have you established a regular communication channel with your supervisor?